

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INPUT

Below are comments derived from a brief survey sent out to community members that have been affected by overdose, overdose death, and addiction. Responses include shared sentiments to help provide a sense of understanding and inspiration for artists to consider in preparing their designs. Our goal is to install a public art memorial that is forever meaningful and powerful. "Their Lives Matter" - Remembering and Spreading Hope. There are two sets of responses. First, from members of the community that have lost a loved one to overdose and second, from our community members that are living in recovery. This is just a mere sampling of the impact that this crisis has had on our community and what this project would mean to them.

Responses from those GRIEVING LOSS

1. What does Overdose Awareness mean to you?

- Bringing awareness to people who may not understand it. Keeping their memories alive cause they still matter.
- It means we are saving another person so they don't have to live the hell that we live due to unfortunately losing someone.
- That the person that overdosed was a human being that didn't choose to die.
- The opportunity to educate, empower and promote hope. Overdose does not discriminate and is preventable. Overdose awareness can help save lives.
- I lost my grandson and it means that maybe someone else's grandson will live.
- Bringing a face to the loss of a loved soul without stigmatized judgement.
- Saving lives by making people aware.
- Enlighten people that overdose does not discriminate and stopping the stigma. It's a disease!
- Educate, empower and promote hope.

2. What kind of impact do you think an overdose awareness memorial sculpture should have on the community? What would you like them to see and feel?

- Happiness, full of life ... although they battled a demon within during addiction they still put up a fight. Warriors.
- See numbers in strength. Know that this is serious and we have lost to many but to inspire to save even more.
- Addicts are smart, kind, giving, creative, they have feelings and they already feel like failures because they can't get off the dope. I would want it to reflect the pain but with loads of hope. People to gather and be proud for making it one day (or hour) at a time.
- The impact should be heart wrenching and powerfully hopeful. Generating enough energy to help reduce the shame and denial of overdose and overdose death. I would like our community to see the lives of our lost loved ones and those continuing to struggle matter. Ultimately, to feel less shame, less denial and more empathy so we can change the landscape of stigma. To bring the community together so no one feels alone whether grieving or struggling.
- The impact on the heart as all of us that have lost someone has a hole now in their heart.
- Have the community feel a bond to these losses, their parents, spouses, family, and friends knowing they once had dreams and hopes right here in our town where their hearts once beat.
- I would like for people to realize these are our kids, sons, brothers, fathers, etc. They are not bottom of the ocean scum.
- To feel like they are people just like them, have empathy to help stop the stigma, and help others to not judge. You never know who it might affect. I think the sculpture will be a good visual and to feel it is happening to our kids and others and no one is immune. Treat others with kindness.
- Heartwarming and inspirational. See that overdose does not discriminate and feel a sense of hope for a brighter future.

3. What would a sculpture of this nature mean to you?

- That people who lose their lives due to overdose don't just stop existing ... even after death they matter and they exist. Memories are everything.
- It would mean a lot due to the fact I've lost a brother, a brother in law and friends to addiction. They will always be remembered and honored!
- That my son's life mattered and not one more needs to die.
- That my son did not die in vain. A peaceful legacy that he lives on to promote hope, healing and a brighter future for everyone affected by addiction and overdose.
- That someone else cares.
- Everything!! I need my son to forever be thought of as we who loved him do and remembered as a boy who loved where he lived.
- I would always have a place to visit in my son's hometown.
- So much to me.
- That my son did not die in vain. Hope for those who continue to struggle.

Responses from those LIVING IN RECOVERY

1. What does Overdose Awareness mean to you?

- That others won't have to die - Overdose Awareness has a huge impact.
- Removing the stigma of overdose and saving lives.
- Honoring those we have lost while educating our communities.
- It means growth, for people to realize that there is a problem in our country.

2. What kind of impact do you think an overdose awareness memorial sculpture should have on the community? What would you like them to see and feel?

- The agony of useless death - the HOPE that is palpable when someone survives an overdose.
- Sadness and loss.
- It should be very impactful. I imagine drawing in passerby's with a beautiful piece of art with a dedication plaque being an educational nugget. I would like them to see something beautiful that can capture the fragility of life. I would like them to feel the gravity of the reality that our communities are dying.
- I would like individuals to acknowledge that this disease is. However, there is help if people are educated on it. Like peer support!

3. What would a sculpture of this nature mean to you?

- A lot - we have lost a lot of people.
- Taking away the shame and allowing people to grieve.
- It would mean all of the people that have left us can be with us still in some capacity. Through the spiritual connection of intentional art.
- It is advocating and it brings awareness.